

SMOKE SIGNALS

Volume 43/Number 8 January 2012



Administration Message

Dear Fellow Residents:

It is hard to believe that the Christmas Holiday Season is behind us and that we are now a few weeks into 2012. As we look forward to this new year, your Village Board, through the IHP Neighborhood Watch Oversight Council, is working with representatives from the several areas of our Village to establish a comprehensive neighborhood watch program. The Village Board has also determined to seek resident input concerning the future progress of Indian Head Park. To that end, in December, the VBT voted to place a referendum on the March 20th general primary election ballot to raise \$350,000 in new revenue from property taxes. This is a matter of great significance for all of us as residents and taxpayers. Here are the details.

Revenue Enhancement Overview

As residents are aware, since the Nation's economic downturn that began in 2008, local municipal governments, including IHP, have been struggling financially. In our Village, tight cost controls have been implemented, street and other projects and purchases have been deferred, and alternative ways to raise revenue without adding to the tax burden of our residents have been explored. The VBT has frozen employee pay raises for the past two years and has reduced Police costs through attrition by not filling one full-time officer position that is vacant. The State of Illinois has attempted to address its financial situation by raising your income taxes from 3% to 5% without maintaining its full level of sharing with local municipal governments. Had they done so, our revenue stream would be a lot better off. Despite our efforts, the Village has only been able to get by financially rather than to improve. Significantly, we have held the line on Village debt. The VBT and I are aware of the needs and requests of our residents for street repairs and maintenance, Police protection, improved resident communication, and so on. As a non-home rule "bedroom" community, IHP has very limited ways in which to enhance revenue other than through property taxes. Accordingly, the VBT has decided to seek the input of our residents concerning a property tax increase at the next election and has voted to place such a referendum comprised of three questions, on the ballot.

The property tax questions (there are 3 related questions) you will see on the ballot on March 20th concerns the Village authorities' request to raise the level of revenue that the Village receives from property taxes by an additional \$350,000. If approved, this new level will be maintained going forward.

Plainly put, this means a one time increase to our tax levy that will remain at the new level from year to year thereafter. The Village Board plans to use the new additional revenue from property taxes for Police protection/resident security, to establish an on-going street repair program, and to pay the increase in the Village debt payments that will happen in 2013. In order to do this, the Village Board is required to seek voter authorization to exceed the tax cap imposed on property tax increases mandated by law. The law is called the Property Tax Extension Limitation Law referred to hereafter as "PTELL". PTELL limits the amount of increase in property taxes the Village can levy to the lesser of 5% or the increase in the Consumers Price Index. The current CPI would allow only a 1.5% increase in property taxes over the prior year.

Our property tax levy for tax year 2011 (which we will pay in 2012) is \$918,500. The 2011 levy is lower than 2010 by \$110,000 because we have paid off the 1997 street bond. Keep in mind that with the final payment of this street bond, the Village authority to levy a tax for that bond which had been used to make the payments is also eliminated. The net result is that the payments and the tax revenue for those payments are gone effective with the 2011 tax year that we will pay in 2012. In order to raise \$350,000 additional, the referendum will seek voter approval to exceed the cap by 41.2%. It is important that you keep in mind that this only pertains to the line item in your tax bill for money that goes to IHP and NOT to your entire tax bill. Let me repeat, **this is not a 41.2% increase in your whole tax bill**. It is only that portion that comes to the Village. For a \$100,000 fair market value ("FMV") home this will be an increase of about \$63.15 before any property tax exemptions like homeowners' or seniors' exemptions are applied. For higher value homes, use a multiple of the \$100,000 figure to estimate the increase.

How will the additional revenue be used?

If approved, the additional revenue will be used for three specific purposes. They are:

- **Funds for payment of the Village Debt;**
- **Increased Police Protection;**
- **Repairs of Village streets.**

Specifically, in 2013, the annual payment for the Village's 2009 Debt Certificate will increase by almost \$100,000. Accordingly, part of the \$350,000 will be used for this purpose.

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Message continued from page 1

These higher payments will go through the year 2021. Next, \$150,000 will be used for police protection and security. Recent events in our Village have caused residents to request various enhancements to our security. The VBT, in agreement with our residents, would use the \$150,000 to enhance security in the Village in several ways such as the neighborhood watch program, resident communications, and the hiring of another full-time sworn police officer to fill a long-standing vacancy in our staffing. I can assure residents that despite this vacancy, police coverage in our Village has not been compromised. However, maintaining coverage through the use of overtime and part-time officers limits the Village's ability to assign an officer on a regular basis to important Village security needs such as neighborhood watch. Additional revenue would also be used for the purchase of new equipment where necessary and to implement some type of rapid communication system with Village residents. Finally, the remaining \$100,000 of the requested \$350,000 additional revenue would be used for the establishment of an on-going road repair and maintenance program. For example, the streets in Ashbrook and Arrowhead Trail need repaving, curbs in Acacia are crumbling, there are cracks and potholes in places in Old Town and the 45 Acres in need of repair, and general street maintenance issues that require attention elsewhere in the Village. This additional revenue would not only give the Village the ability to repair streets that are now badly in need but also the flexibility to seek grants for street repairs that require matching (or partial) funds from IHP.

The Referendum Questions

There are three separate questions that will be placed on the ballot. The first question, if approved by the voters, will be the one that grants authority to raise an additional \$350,000 from property taxes in IHP. The second question, if approved, will allow the Village to levy a tax for the specific purpose of Police protection. The third question, if approved, will allow the Village to levy a tax for Street repairs. These questions are integrally related to each other and necessary by law to be placed on the ballot.

The PTELL Question

The first question you will see is the one that would authorize a revenue increase of \$350,000 from property taxes. The following wording will be used and the voter must choose Yes or No for this question.

Shall the extension limitation under the Property Tax Extension Limitation Law for Village of Indian Head Park, Cook County, Illinois, be increased from the lesser of 5% or the percentage increase in the Consumer Price Index over the prior levy year to 41.2% per year for 2012?

The following supplemental information will be provided on the ballot:

For the 2012 tax levy year the approximate amount of the additional tax extendable against the property containing a single family residence and having a fair market value at the time of the referendum of \$100,000 is estimated to be \$63.15.

In order to raise the new revenue, the majority of the voters must vote YES for this question. In this case, the plans for the new revenue can be implemented. If the majority votes NO, then the referendum fails and no new revenue can be raised above the amount allowed by the CPI. In this latter case, the plans for the new revenue cannot be implemented.

In determining how much the portion of your property tax bill for IHP may increase you need to locate the fair market value of your home as determined by the Cook County Assessor. It is listed on the upper-right hand side of the 2nd Installment of your last tax bill. For example, if the FMV for your home is \$100,000, the increase is estimated to be about \$63.15 before any exemptions are applied. Thus, this is the highest value increase anyone should see on a \$100,000 FMV home. If your home has an FMV of \$200,000, the increase is **twice** the amount of a \$100,000 home or about \$126.30 before exemptions.

The Police Protection Question

The Village currently levies property taxes for the Corporate fund, but this has a limit. The second question on the ballot will allow the Village to levy a part of the referendum

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(708) 246-3137

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Smoke Signals is published by the Village of Indian Head Park to inform its residents of present activities in the village and the ever-growing plans for the future in the pursuit of better government and good citizenship.

Teepee Topics news items should be submitted to the Newsletter Coordinator at the Municipal Offices.

Full page advertisements - \$200.00, 1/2 page advertisements - \$125.00, 3 1/2" x 3 1/2" size advertisements - \$75.00, business card size advertisements - \$45.00, trading post advertisements - \$20.00 (no commercial advertisements - the advertisement will run two times at no cost, then a \$20.00 charge).

Extra copies and back issues (up to one year) of *Smoke Signals* can be obtained at the Village Hall.

www.indianheadpark-il.gov

VILLAGE OF INDIAN HEAD PARK

201 Acacia Drive, Indian Head Park, IL 60525
(708) 246-3080
www.indianheadpark-il.gov

Office Hours

Mon., Tues., Wed. and Fri 9:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m. and
Thursdays, 9:00 a.m. to 7:00 p.m.
Closed Saturday, Sunday and Holidays

Mayor: Richard S. Andrews

Trustees: Deborah A. Anselmo Carol Coleman
Brian T. Bailey Norman L. Schnauffer
Anne Bermier Matthew P. Walsh II

Village Clerk: Joseph V. Consolo

**Chief of Police/
Administrator:** Frank Alonzo, Jr.

Police Dept. Non-Emergency 246-4534
Emergency 9-1-1

Fire Dept. Non-Emergency 352-9229
Emergency 9-1-1

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amount of \$350,000 for specific use for Police Protection. The question you will see on the ballot is as follows. Voters must choose Yes or No for this question.

Shall the Village of Indian Head Park, Cook County, Illinois, be authorized to levy a new tax for police protection purposes and have an additional tax of 0.137% of the equalized assessed value of taxable property therein extended for such purposes?

The following supplemental information for this question will be provided on the ballot:

- (1) *The approximate amount of taxes extendable at the most recently extended limiting rate is \$847,360 and the approximate amount of taxes extendable if the proposition is approved is \$1,097,360.*
- (2) *For the 2012 levy year the approximate amount of the additional tax extendable against property containing a single family residence and having a fair market value at the time of the referendum of \$100,000 is estimated to be \$45.10.*

If this question is approved by a majority of the voters, the Village would be authorized to levy property taxes of \$45.10 of the total PTELL increase of \$63.15 specifically for Police Protection. **Note, this \$45.10 is not in addition to the \$63.15 but is a part of the total.** If the question is rejected by a majority of the voters, the Village would not be allowed to levy specifically for Police Protection.

The Street Repairs Question

Like the referendum question for Police Protection, the third question you will see on the ballot, asks voters to grant authority to the Village to levy a part of the referendum amount of \$350,000 for specific use for street and bridge purposes. The question you will see on the ballot will be as follows. The voters must choose Yes or No for this question.

Shall the Village of Indian Head Park, Cook County, Illinois, be authorized to levy a new tax for street and bridge purposes and have an additional tax of 0.055% of the equalized assessed value of taxable property therein extended for such purposes?

The following supplemental information for this question will be provided on the ballot:

- (1) *The approximate amount of taxes extendable at the most recently extended limiting rate is \$847,360 and the approximate amount of taxes extendable if the proposition is approved is \$947,360.*
- (2) *For the 2012 levy year the approximate amount of the additional tax extendable against property containing a single family residence and having a fair market value at the time of the referendum of \$100,000 is estimated to be \$18.04.*

If this question is approved by a majority of the voters, the Village would be authorized to levy property taxes of \$18.04 of the total PTELL increase of \$63.15 specifically for Street and bridge purposes. **Again, this \$18.04 is not in addition to the \$63.15 but is a part of the total.** If the question is rejected by a majority of the voters, the Village would not be allowed to levy specifically for Streets and Bridges.

The Outcome

If the first question mentioned above is approved by the majority of voters, the Village will be authorized to increase the property tax levy above the PTELL limit to raise an ad-

ditional \$350,000 in revenue. If it is not approved by the majority of voters, then no new revenue can be raised above the PTELL limit. The second question, if approved by the majority of voters, will allow the Village to levy property tax for the specific purpose of Police Protection. If it is not approved then no revenue can be raised specifically for this purpose. Finally, with regard to the third question, if it is approved by the majority of voters, then the Village will be allowed to levy property tax for the specific purpose of Streets and Bridges. If it is not approved then no revenue can be raised specifically for this purpose.

Voters are free to vote yes or no to any one or all of these questions as they choose. To enable the Village Board to go forward in raising the new revenue for the purposes as described above, a favorable vote is required for all three questions. A negative vote as to the PTELL question will not allow the Village to raise any new revenue above the PTELL limit. A favorable vote to the PTELL question but a negative vote to one or both of the other questions would allow the Village to raise some but not all of the proposed \$350,000 new revenue sought because of State law limits on the corporate fund.

Please be aware that the Village property tax levy for 2011 is decreasing by \$110,000 (used for the street bond payment that was just paid off) below the level reflected in your last tax bill (i.e. for 2010 paid in 2011). The referendum is asking for \$350,000 more above the 2011 level. If the referendum is approved, the result is a net increase of \$240,000 above the level that our last property tax bills were based upon. This means that the net increase over the 2010 levy for a home with an FMV of \$100,000 is estimated to be about \$43.30 before exemptions above what the property owner paid on his 2nd Installment this past fall. Note, if the referendum is approved by a majority of the voters, this increase will not be paid until the 2nd Installment of the property tax bill in the fall of 2013 and received by the Village shortly thereafter. As can be seen from this, the time lag involved between voter approval, implementation and receipt of the additional revenue by the Village makes this a significant and important issue to all residents and the future of Indian Head Park. The foregoing is intended to explain the facts of the referendum and the mechanics of the ballot questions and is not to advocate for any choice. The decision belongs to the voters.

Additional factual information will be provided before the March 20, 2012 general primary election in future issues of the *Smoke Signals*.

Respectfully, Richard S. Andrews, mayor

Scheduled Meeting Dates

Village Board of Trustees: 7:30 p.m.

Thursday, February 9, 2012

Planning and Zoning Commission: 7:30 p.m.

Tuesday, February 7, 2012

Fire and Police Commission: 7:00 p.m.

No meeting scheduled at this time.

E-911 Board: 6:30 p.m.

No meeting scheduled at this time.

All meetings are held at the Municipal Facility at 201 Acacia Drive. All residents are welcomed!

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March 20, 2012 Primary Election Voter Information

The Cook County Clerk's Office has completed the decennial redistricting of Congressional, Legislative, Senatorial and Board of Review Districts. These changes resulted in a number of split districts. To reduce the number of split districts and to proportionally distribute registered voters, some precincts were reconfigured. Prior to the upcoming Primary Election on Monday, March 20, 2012, you may wish to check your polling place location at the following Website: www.voterinfonet.com to make sure there were no changes to your voting precinct for the upcoming election. For the March 20, 2012 Primary Election, in person early voting will take place from February 27th to March 15th. A list of early voting locations may be obtained on the Cook County Clerk's Website at www.cookcountyclerk.com. The last day to register to vote for the upcoming election is Tuesday, February 21st. If you have moved to Indian Head Park from another county or state or have changed addresses, you may register to vote at the Village of Indian Head Park Administration Offices during regular business hours at 201 Acacia Drive: Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday and Friday 9:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m. and Thursdays, 9:00 a.m. to 7:00 p.m. Please provide two forms of identification with your current address in Indian Head Park.

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Programs and Services

The programs and social services offered by Aging Care Connections are provided to adults age 60 and older and their family members. Programs and services are designed to provide options for care to seniors in order to enhance their ability to remain as independent as possible in their own communities. Aging Care Connections employs professionally-trained staff who can assess the needs of older adults facing a change in health or functional ability on an individual basis. A case manager can offer information, assistance and referral to in-home services designed to address the needs identified. Programs and services can also provide support and assistance to family members caring for older adults. Caregivers can receive valuable information on a wide range of programs, services, support and resources currently available.

Information And Assistance

Aging Care Connections provides comprehensive information about local, state and national resources important to older adults and their family members. An Information and Assistance Specialist is available daily to answer questions, make referrals, and discuss options for care. Aging Care Connections can provide a skilled professional able to access services through direct referrals to service providers; linkage to assessment for in-home care and benefits; and information on aging issues, chronic illness and support networks. Aging Care Connections is your local point of entry to a state-wide network of care coordination units able to provide help throughout the state with timely, appropriate, and accurate information.

Comprehensive Care Coordination

Aging specialists with knowledge and experience in the field of aging are available to provide consultation on resources and comprehensive assessment to older adults and their families in a variety of settings. Staff are able to offer consultation in the home, local rehab facilities and the hospital. Assessments are based on the unique needs of each older adult and existing resources. Care managers consider multiple factors such as physical, emotional, and financial needs, as well as strengths and support systems. The result is a plan of care utilizing public and private resources, family support, and the older adult's preferences.

Health And Wellness

The Aging Care Connections Senior Health Center is an outpatient clinic of the Department of Geriatrics of Adventist LaGrange Memorial Hospital. In collaboration with the Aging Care Connections, the Senior Health Center is staffed by a physician specializing in the medical care of adults aged 60 and older. The Senior Health Center physician works closely with the professional staff of Aging Care Connections to assure that all the needs of patients are met. Additional services provided include health education, medication counseling and individual consultation on health-related topics.

The Aging Resource Center (ARC) Program

The Aging Resource Center (ARC) Program offers older adults and their families the opportunity to secure community

resources and services prior to discharge from the hospital Education And Training

Education And Training

The Older Adults Education and Training Department provides enrichment opportunities through a variety of classes and programs and/or skilled care facilities.

Aging Well

Aging Well, a community partnership, is dedicated to working with communities to create an environment in which people can age well. Serving 20 communities in the greater Lyons Township Illinois area, the program is composed of hundreds of older adults and more than 130 community-based organizations working together to create an environment in which people can age well.

Chore Housekeeping

This service is available to older adults in need of assistance with light housekeeping, shopping and laundry. Workers are selected and assigned by Aging Care Connections to provide housekeeping for two hours each week or bi-monthly.

Transportation

Lyons Township offers bus service to seniors who live within the Township. For information about the bus service, please visit the Lyons Township web site www.lyonstownshipil.gov and click on "OFFICES" and select "SENIOR TRANSPORTATION." Please note that in order to use the bus service, a free pass must be secured at Aging Care Connections, Monday-Friday 8:30 a.m.-4:30 p.m.

For comprehensive information about transportation options for seniors within our service area, please call Linda Tomko, Aging Care Connections Information & Assistance Specialist, at 708-354-1323, ext. 215.

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TEEPEE TOPICS

Our deepest condolences to the family and friends of Lenore Halac who recently passed away. Lenore was a long time resident of Indian Head Park, she previously worked for the Village of Indian Head for twenty years in the water billing department, she was one of the first editors of Smoke Signals newsletter and active in the Indian Head Park Woman's Club. Also, our sympathies to the family and friends of Nanci Makris, who passed away. Nanci was a long time resident of Indian Head Park and owner of the Flame Restaurant in Countryside.

The Lyonsville Congregational Church at 6871 Joliet Road in Indian Head Park will be hosting its 5th annual Valentine Pancake Breakfast and Bake Sale on Saturday, February 11, 2012 from 8:00 a.m. to 11:00 a.m. Treat your sweetie to a breakfast of pancakes, sausage, regular and sugar free syrup, orange juice, tomato juice, coffee and tea. Great bakers are planning a bake sale with many goodies you can purchase to take home. Tickets are \$6.00 for adults, \$4.00 for children ages 5-12 and children under 4 are free. Call the church office at (708) 246-1255 for additional information and to purchase tickets.

Gloria Valentino, a resident of Indian Head Park, helps people over age 50 to start their writing journey by journaling and memoir writing. Gloria also writes a monthly column for the FraNoi Magazine and the column will be on their Website at: FRANOI.COM. Each month, Gloria's column will feature the following: (1) Heart to Heart; (2) Words of Wisdom; (3)

Write from the Heart; and (4) Recommended Reading. If you are interested in learning more about journaling, please contact Gloria at (708) 246-5528.

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